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The boys are thus boarded for three years, free of direct cost to their parents, at the expense of the whole community, and both acquire habits of restraint and submission to authority, which could not possibly be the case at the same age at home, and obtain a simple vernacular education sufficient to carry them through life. The females are entirely uneducated, and it is said to be as hard to find a woman who can read or write in Burmah, as a man who cannot do both. Nevertheless the women seem to be fitted by nature for keeping their own place in society. They are excellent merchants, and they say a great many of the bargains for rice and other produce are effected by them. They can keep their husbands in order, and slipper them when they misbehave; a curious example of which I saw in passing through a village not far from Moulmein. A Burmese girl, who lived with a Mahomedan from India as his wife (having cause to be jealous), dragged him out into the street, seized him by the turban, took it off, stripped him of what money he had, gave him a good beating with her fists and her slippers, proclaiming most vociferously his fault to all the bystanders, not one of whom interfered; the miserable wretch taking it all as if it were his due. I was told such scenes were not uncommon.

"The Burmese have many of the characteristics of the Chinese, are ingenious and enterprising, though lazy. They have much independence of spirit, and nearly all the menial labour in British Burmah is performed by Coolies from India. Altogether they are a race well calculated, under good government, to make far more of a country than ever the Hindoos could; and were this only secured to Upper Burmah, there must be a great future before the country, and Rangoon could not fail rapidly to become a place of the utmost importance.

"Moulmein, on the other hand, has many drawbacks; the approach to the port is very difficult and dangerous. The River Salween, though a splendid stream, is unnavigable beyond about a hundred miles, on account of a serious barrier of rapids. There is little or no rice-trade, and nothing, in fact, to depend upon but the teak-timber trade. Owing to the extremely depressed state of matters with regard to teak, the place is for the present almost dead, and merchants, who formerly used to consider it their head-quarters, have now merely a subsidiary agency there."

2. *Exploration of the Endeavour River, Cape York Peninsula, Australia.* By JOHN JARDINE, Esq., Police Magistrate, Somerset, Cape York.

ON the morning of 27th September, 1865, accompanied by my son and three of the officers of H.M.S.S. *Salamander*, having by the courtesy of Acting-Commander Yonge been furnished with a boat and crew, I entered the Endeavour River, and proceeded with the tide for 3 miles, where the mangroves which cover the low country round the mouth cease, and the river takes a decided form, flowing in a width of 400 yards, between moderately high banks of a reddish clay, overlaid by a layer of light vegetable mould. The country on either side lightly timbered with bloodwood, Moreton Bay ash, &c.

Following the course upwards for about 15 miles further, the description of the river as given in the Admiralty chart was found to be correct in all respects, with the exception that fresh water was not met with till the head of the tide was reached—a distance of $3\frac{1}{2}$ miles further than the survey goes. This may readily be accounted for by the unusual dryness of the season, evidences of which were everywhere visible. At this last point the channel becomes very narrow, with a depth of water of about 5 feet, and it terminates abruptly in a small basin below a bar of slate rock.

To this point the general course of the river was N.E. by N., when it turns to N. by W., and continues in that direction to a remarkable gap in the Main Coast Range in which the river appears to take its rise. The range here is

17 miles distant in a direct line from Grassy Hill, at the entrance of the river.

I followed the upward course of the river for about 2 miles above the tide. The stream had ceased to run, but there was abundance of water in large rocky pools. The banks on either side were high, and the country level, of red soil, well grassed, and moderately timbered. I saw no scrub, except on the small alluvial flats by the river-side. These were covered with vine-scrub usually seen in such situations. The trees were large white gum, melaleuca, silk-cotton, white cedar, Moreton Bay chesnut, and coral-tree growing to a very large size. Plenty of game was seen, and a small party of natives, who made off as soon as they saw us. I estimate the distance travelled to be, by the river, 21 miles, and in a direct line, 12 miles from the mouth of the river.

On reaching the boat at dusk it was found that one of the crew had received a wound from the accidental discharge of a rifle, so severe as to make it necessary to return to the ship without delay; and it was reached before daylight next morning.

A boat was again kindly placed at my disposal by Commander Yonge. I did not, however, consider it necessary to resume my examination of the upper part of the Endeavour, but proceeded to search the land in the neighbourhood of the entrance for fresh water. Landing on the south side, under Grassy Hill, accompanied by my son and Lieutenant Edwin, R.N., I proceeded along the base of the range, ending in Mount Cook, and found all the water-courses dry, with the exception of one marked "fresh" in the chart. In that a small quantity of water, putrid, and quite unfit to drink, remained. I ascended a prominent point in the range, and had a view of the river winding through a broad valley, the country consisting of lightly timbered low ridges. The soil of the neighbourhood of Mount Cook consists chiefly of poor clay; the ridges are strewn thickly with broken clayey slate. The timber is chiefly stringy-bark and bloodwood. Mount Cook itself is of granite formation.

As there was no water to be found on the south side, we crossed to the north of the river, and at the head of a watercourse which runs into the sea at the foot of Mount Yonge, about 2 miles distant from the beach, good pools of fresh water were discovered. This was the only fresh water I could find in the neighbourhood, though doubtless there was more, as the natives were numerous.

The whole of the point formed between the sea-beach and the north arm of the Endeavour, appears to consist of mangrove-swamp and sandhills, covered with bent-grass and small brushwood, chiefly banksia: a few small trees of sandalwood were met with here; but I did not succeed in finding any further up the river, or of a sufficient size for trade.

It is to be regretted that the scarcity of water near the mouth of the Endeavour River forms so strong an obstacle to its occupation as a settlement. It must, however, be borne in mind that the present has been a most unusually dry season. Although the country in the immediate neighbourhood of the port is by no means inviting in quality, still the upper part of the Endeavour Valley, commencing, say, at a distance of 3 miles from the coast, is of a much better description, and well adapted for grazing cattle. The upper part of the valley is also well watered.

The port, though small, is convenient, and has the advantage of an entrance with 10 feet of water at low tide. There is also a depth of water at the foot of Grassy Hill, sufficient for a vessel of considerable size to lie within a few yards of the shore. I am informed by the master of H.M.S.S. *Salamander*, that, on examination, he finds no alteration has taken place in the soundings at the entrance of the river, as given in the Admiralty chart.

I have carefully examined the coast from Rockingham Bay to Somerset, and can see no other place which offers the appearance of being at all suitable

for settlement, except the Endeavour River. With all its disadvantages, its position—nearly central between the two places before named—and being so near to the tracks of ships passing by the inner route, must, I think, give it a preference. Its situation, also, in respect to the country, reputed to be pasturable, on the heads of the Mitchell River, and also near the Kennedy River and Princess Charlotte Bay, would be convenient.

Having read the evidence given before the committee for the steam postal communication through Torres Straits, it appears to me that if it is the determination of the Queensland Government to establish a line by the inner passage, it will be indispensable that marks and beacons, and perhaps lights, should be placed at many points along the route. It will, of course, be necessary that such marks and beacons should have continual attention, to see that they are not displaced or destroyed. This duty could be best performed from stations along the coast; and, as the most intricate part of the navigation of the inner passage, and that most requiring marking, lies between the Endeavour River and Booby Island—a distance of 400 miles—I think that no two more convenient places than the Endeavour and Somerset could in the first instance be selected for such stations.

I would here suggest that much valuable information on the subjects connected with the navigation inside the Great Barrier Reef might be obtained from Mr. C. Edwards, of Sydney, who, for a number of years past, has been, and still is, engaged in bêche-de-mer fishing on the islands and coral-banks of these seas, and than whom, I believe, no one is better acquainted with the tides, currents, winds, and all matters affecting their navigation; and also from Mr. Hayman, master of the *Salamander*, who has had the experience of several passages between Brisbane and Somerset.

Situated about 6 miles to the southward of the Endeavour River is the entrance of another stream, an opportunity of examining which will be afforded me on the return of the *Salamander*, and the result of which I will communicate.

3. *Exploration of Annan and Esk Rivers, near Cape York, Australia.*

By JOHN JARDINE, Esq., Police Magistrate, Somerset, Cape York.

On the 11th November, 1865, the *Salamander* anchored off an opening in the coast formed by the entrance of two streams about midway between Monkhouse and Walker points. The afternoon of the same day was occupied by me in examining the southern stream. At the entrance it had a width of 100 yards. After following what appeared to be the main channel for upwards of four miles through extensive mangrove-flats, and passing the entrances of numerous minor branches, joining on each side, the passage became so narrow that the oars touched the bushes on either bank; I therefore returned to the entrance, when, on ascending a peaked hill of considerable height, and which I have marked as "Quartz Peak," from the large blocks of quartz which form its top, a good view was obtained of the course of the southern stream, which I have marked the Esk. The upper portion appeared to drain an open valley of considerable extent, and extending in a north-westerly direction.

The northern stream—which I should wish to name the Annan—was also distinctly seen running for a long distance to the north-eastward through a wide valley, and apparently taking its rise in the main coast range. This river, although marked in the chart "rivulet," is fully entitled to the greater term, while the country through which it ran presented so favourable an appearance that I determined on examining it, as far as possible, on the following day. Accordingly, a boat and crew having been kindly placed at my disposal by